

• **Native American Rights Fund (NARF)** – Founded in 1970, the NARF is the oldest and largest nonprofit law firm dedicated to asserting and defending the rights of Indian tribes, organizations and individuals nationwide. NARF's main office is located in Boulder, Colorado with additional offices in Washington, DC and Anchorage, AK.



• **Rocky Mountain Indian Chamber of Commerce (RMICC)** – The goal at RMICC is to promote commerce that benefits the Native Community. They strive to enhance Native Businesses in their path to growth, to empower Native Professionals, Entrepreneurs, and Native Students to succeed and to embrace Business Partners in their course to reach the Native community. The RMICC was founded in 1989 and is headquartered in Denver.



• **Society of American Indian Government Employee (SAIGE)** – Formed in 2002, SAIGE is considered a ?virtual? national nonprofit with three fourths of their board members residing locally. SAIGE's mission is to promote the recruitment, retention, development and advancement of American Indian and Alaska Native government employees, and work to ensure their equal treatment under the law; to educate federal agencies in the history and obligations of the Federal Indian Trust Responsibility and to assist them in its implementation; to assist government agencies in the development and delivery of initiatives and programs which honor the unique Federal-Tribal relationship; and to provide a national forum for issues and topics affecting American Indian and Alaska Native government employees.

• **Stronghold Society, Inc.** – Stages the largest skateboarding competition targeting American Indian youth in the country here in Denver as well as has built a world-class skate park on the Pine Ridge reservation in South Dakota in 2011. Their mission is to inspire confidence, creativity, hope, and ambition for the youth of native and non-native communities; by encouraging youth to take action to live a healthy life in mind, body, and spirit through the diverse means of skateboarding, arts, and creative movements: Live Life Call to Action!

• **U.S. Department of Energy National Renewable Energy Laboratory Tribal Energy Program** located in Golden - Provides financial and technical assistance that enables tribes to evaluate and develop their renewable energy resources and reduce their energy consumption through efficiency and weatherization. The program also offers education and training opportunities designed to foster clean energy technology adoption, promote green jobs and growth, and strengthen native communities.

• **U.S. Department of the Interior Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs Division of Energy and Mineral Development (DEMD)**, located in Lakewood - DEMD provides special services to the Indian energy and mineral owner that are unique within the Department of Interior. The primary goal of the Division is to provide the best possible technical, engineering and economic advice to Indian landowners seeking to manage and develop their energy and mineral resources.

• **U.S. Housing and Urban Development, Northern Plains Office of Native American Programs (ONAP)** – Administers housing and community development programs that benefit American Indian and Alaska Native tribal governments, tribal members, the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands, Native Hawaiians, and other Native American organizations. ONAP's mission is to increase the supply of safe, decent, and affordable housing available to Native American families; to strengthen communities by improving living conditions and creating economic opportunities for tribes and Indian housing residents; and to ensure fiscal integrity in the operation of the programs it administers.

Finally, the following three community pillars are community-based nonprofits serving Denver Urban Natives in the areas of health and family services:



• **Denver Indian Center (DIC)** – In 2013, The Indian Center celebrated their thirtieth anniversary of service to the Denver American Indian community. They continue to provide positive space to empower Native youth, families and community through self-determination, cultural identity and education. As Denver's oldest Urban American Indian Center they currently offer a Native Workforce Program that focuses on enhancing the employability and employment prospects mainly through training, education assistance and job referral & placement services. The DIC also provides an emergency food bank and is a regular place where Native youth and elders participate in community and cultural gatherings. The Indian Center is located in the West Denver neighborhood of Westwood on Morrison Road.

• **Denver Indian Family Resource Center (DIFRC)** – Co-located at the Denver Indian Center in 2011, DIFRC is committed to strengthen vulnerable American Indian children and families through collaborative and culturally responsive services. They hold facilitated year-round classes in Family Preservation, Family Reunification, Indian Child Welfare Advocacy, Healthy Living and Behavioral Health. DIFRC was established in 2000 and maintains a proactive staff of ten and several dedicated volunteers who assist with parenting, healthy cooking, ZUMBA and community gardening classes.



• **Denver Indian Health and Family Services (DIHFS)** – DIHFS is Denver's urban Indian health program, they provide culturally-appropriate health care services for American Indian families and individuals. Partially funded by Indian Health Services (IHS), DIHFS is one of the thirty-four members of the National Council of Urban Indian Health. While not a full-service IHS hospital, they provide health care services, including some dental procedures at a reduced or no cost, depending on a client's financial situation. Located near Denver's City Park, one block from historic East High School, DIHFC has been providing a vehicle for a healthy Native community since 1978.

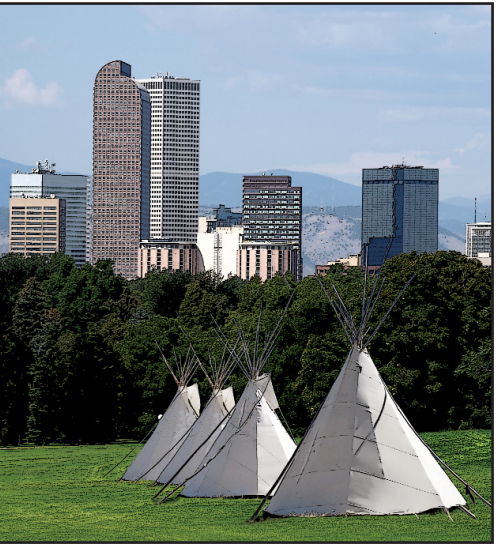


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“Gathering at the strongholds of our communities to strengthen the whole... You Thrive, I Thrive, WE Thrive. Our ‘native way of life’ is the model needed for our communities across this nation and the world as a whole. It begins within and ripples outwards to affect all of life. It begins right here... WE are the epicenter.”

— Walt Pourier (Oglala Lakota) Executive Director, Stronghold Society



In the late 1990's, a New York Times news article proclaimed, **“Indian Country Finds a Capital in Denver.”** This is true in many ways. In the 1950s, Native Americans were “encouraged” to leave their reservations to pursue jobs in urban centers. Denver was attractive to many in the West, especially the Navajo of the Southwest, and the Lakota of the South Dakota plains. Since then, Colorado's Indian population has grown to over 107,000, with about eighty percent of this population living in metropolitan regions such as the Denver-metro area¹. Approximately 100 tribes are represented here. Thousands of these “urban Indians” still return to their tribal communities or reservations throughout the year to participate in familial and tribal events and ceremonies.

The beautiful Mile High City is also home to many community-based organizations serving the needs of local “urban” Indians. These agencies receive federal, state, city, and private funding to provide health services, economic opportunities, continuing education support, and other resources to Denver's indigenous community. To learn more about these Native serving organizations please see the **Colorado Commission of Indian Affairs (CCIA)** website.

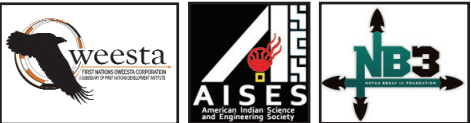
Denver is home to the **Rocky Mountain Indian Chamber of Commerce (RMICC)**; the Chamber's main goal is to promote commerce that benefits the Native community. Since 2003, RMICC has partnered with the **Colorado Indian Education Foundation (CIEF)** to diseminate \$130,000 in scholarships to over 120 American Indian scholars attending in-state colleges and universities. These scholar-

ships are made possible by the ?American Indian Scholars? license plate program. Visit **www.rmicc.org** to become a member and learn how you can order your own Native specialty license plate.

Not only is Metro Denver comprised of the nation's largest concentration of national American Indian organizations, it also is home to the country's oldest legal advocacy organization for Native issues, The **Native American Rights Fund (NARF)** located in Boulder. In 2009, NARF, along with lead plaintiff Elouis Cobell (Blackfeet 1945-2011) successfully settled a \$3.4 billion class action lawsuit over federal mismanagement of individual Indian trust fund accounts. This settlement produced the \$60 million Cobell Scholarship Fund which the **American Indian College Fund (AICF)** will begin distributing in early 2014 to Native student awardees attending mainstream colleges and universities. The Cobell Scholarship fund will expand AICF's ability to support more Native college students beyond tribal colleges. Currently, AICF distributes more than \$5.5 million annually to the nation's 34 accredited tribal colleges and universities attended by American Indian students across the nation pursuing vocational certifications and undergraduate degrees.

Downtown Denver is home to one of the nation's largest American Indian economic engines, the **Native American Bank (NAB)**. This full service bank is the only Native American owned nationwide financial institution with the aim of providing financing for Indian-owned businesses and investments. One innovative loan program that the NAB offers to qualified American Indian/Alaska Native families is the **Section 184 Indian Home Loan Guarantee Program**. Since 1995, this national HUD supported program has empowered over 22,000 American Indian families to purchase or build homes on and off the reservations. Locally, more than 150 urban Indian families have benefited from this unique homeownership program, which has infused over \$25 million into Denver's housing economy. This home loan expanded throughout Colorado in 2005 after the Southern Ute Tribe lobbied and received approval from HUD to expand their service area statewide. Now, any tribally enrolled and financially qualified Native borrower can access this loan program.

Another economic development initiative is the nonprofit **First Nations Development Institute (FNDI)**. This twenty year old grant making foundation has provided over \$20 million in philanthropic support and technical resources to tribes and Native nonprofit organizations utilizing asset-based development efforts. FNDI is also role modeling the innovative concept of sharing workspace with three national organizations, the **First Nations Oweesta Corporation**, the **American Indian Science and Engineering Society (AISES)** and the **Notah Begay III Foundation (NB3)**. A shared space creates a sense of place, fosters collaboration and resource sharing, extends the reach of organizations housed within them, and achieves greater impact benefiting Tribal communities.



¹ This figure includes interracial combinations, a new option included in the 2010 Census.

National mental health and well-being initiatives have been spearheaded by the **Centers for American Indian and Alaska Native Health, Colorado School of Public Health & Dental Medicine** since 2002. It is housed in the stunningly designed and Native-inspired **Nighthorse Campbell Native Health Building** on the University of Colorado Denver Anschutz Medical Campus. The Center employs over seventy-five medical professionals and has generated millions of dollars in federal and private funding for significant Native public health education and research.



Satisfying the need for Denver’s Native cuisine is **Tocabe: An American Indian Eatery**, a one of kind restaurant. Owners Ben Jacobs (Osage) and Matt Chandra both take great pride in serving delicious Native inspired foods such as Indian tacos, bison and wojapi (berry sauce). Tocabe, meaning the color blue in the Osage language, has been featured on the Food Network’s ?Diners, Drive-ins and Dives? food television series. After celebrating their fifth anniversary, Tocabe was awarded the Entrepreneur of the Year (2012) by the National Center for American Indian Enterprise Development for demonstrating outstanding leadership and creating healthy Native American economies.

The Denver Indian community also harbors many **professionals and emerging leaders** making important decisions affecting local and national policy in the areas of education, health, environment, law and athletics. Denver is home to many notable American Indian scholars whose academic success was supported by local higher education institutions. There are also many Indian professionals mentoring and assisting the next generation with experiential knowledge outside of traditional academic settings.

Setting the standard for Native academia was **Vine Deloria, Jr.**, (Standing Rock Sioux 1933-2005), author of Custer Died for Your Sins: An Indian Manifesto. Deloria was a professor of history, law, religious studies and political science at CU-Boulder. He offered a direct, no-nonsense Indian perspective that truly explains the Native American privilege of being a distinct ethnic group with something shared by no other ethnic group—a political relationship as sovereign nations with the U.S. government that is detailed in legal treaties.



Many nationally recognized Native artists known for their music, writings, and graphic works have made metro-Denver their home. Our artists are multidimensional and not confined to traditional drumming and fluting. Contemporary artists are as diverse as traditional performers in the community, and excel in a range of genres including country music, hip-hop rock and roll and other popular music styles. In 2013, **Native Max Magazine** was launched by twenty-two year old Kelly Holmes (Cheyenne River Sioux), as an online magazine. The publication incorporates high and urban fashion, beauty, art, entertainment, health and fitness, while showcasing talented individuals. Issues are available in digital format at www.nativemax.com.



A showcase for Native American culture is the annual **Denver March Powwow**, which usually attracts over 55,000 visitors to the Denver Coliseum. This event, typically held during the third weekend in March, is one of the largest national indigenous gatherings honoring American Indian tribes as well as the First Nations People from Canada. Other inter-tribal gatherings occur throughout the year such as at Tallbull Memorial Park located in Douglas County's Daniel's Park. With the support of past and current Denver Mayors, this pristine wilderness area has been the site for many important and uplifting events including concerts, powwows, and running races mainly for the benefit of Indian youth.

With this strong cultural foundation and the numerous human and organizational resources available in Denver, the Indian leaders of tomorrow are developing and thriving; thus guaranteeing that tribal perspectives will continue to shape the American mainstream for centuries to come.

To gain a greater insight into Native American contemporary and traditional culture, read the works of **Gyasi Ross** (Blackfeet), **Sherman Alexie** (Spokane/Coeur d’Alene), Colorado resident, **Linda Hogan** (Chickasaw), Sturm College of Law at University of Denver graduate **Chase Iron Eyes**, University of Colorado Denver graduate, **Simon Moya-Smith** (Oglala Lakota), Denverite, **Robert Chanate** (Kiowa) and former Denver American Indian Commissioner **Carol Berry** (Chickasaw).

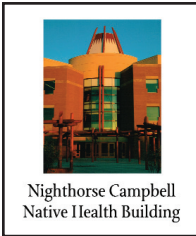


For information on Indian issues and events happening in and around the Denver metro area, see the **Indian Voices Newsletter** produced by **Theresa Halsey** (Hunkpapa Lakota) at www.kgnu.org/indianvoices. Also, view the 2013 award winning documentary “**Urban Rez**” produced by Rocky Mountain PBS exploring the lasting legacy of the relocation policies that encouraged American Indians to leave their homelands and relocate to urban areas including Denver and across the country.

Here is a listing of other notable American Indian/Native American national nonprofits and governmental agencies based in the Denver-metro area that are positively influencing policy creation and empowering tribal communities.



• **American Indian College Fund** (AICF) – The AICF transforms Indian higher education by funding and creating awareness of the unique, community-based accredited tribal colleges and universities, offering students access to knowledge, skills, and cultural values which enhance their communities and the country as a whole. Originally located in New York City the AICF moved their headquarters to Denver in 1995.



• **Centers for American Indian and Alaska Native Health** (CAIANH) and Center for Native Oral Health Research (CNOHR) - The mission for the CAIANH is to promote the health and well-being of American Indians and Alaska Natives, of all ages, by pursuing research, training, continuing education, technical assistance, and information dissemination within a biopsychosocial framework that recognizes the unique cultural contexts of this special population. The CNOHR conducts research aimed at developing culturally acceptable and effective strategies to prevent infectious oral diseases in American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) populations. This organization also conducts and publishes a research journal and is housed within the Anschutz Medical Campus (formerly the Fitzsimons Army Hospital) in Aurora.



• **Colorado Commission of Indian Affairs** (CCIA) – The CCIA office has the unique opportunity to serve as the official liaison between the Southern Ute Indian and Ute Mountain Ute Tribes and the State of Colorado. The State and sovereign tribal government relationship is founded on a solid government-to-government relationship. The Commission ensures direct contact with the Tribes and also with Colorado’s urban Indian communities. Mainly, CCIA proactively facilitates communication between state agencies and affiliated groups, the Tribes and other American Indian organizations to positively impact the lives of Colorado’s American Indians and communities.

• **Colorado Indian Education Foundation** (CIEF) – The Colorado Indian Education Foundation (CIEF) is a Denver based nonprofit organization that provides educational opportunities and scholarships to American Indians attending school in the State of Colorado. CIEF is made possible by committed individuals who envision a greater awareness of Colorado’s American Indian heritage and culture, and acknowledge the need for resources for American Indian students in the State of Colorado. The Foundation is proud to offer Native students this scholarship program.



Native-focused undertakings.

• Denver March Powwow, Inc. – Since 1984, Denver March Powwow committee has been staging the three-day event, which is considered as one of nation’s largest indoor powwows. This annual gathering is typically held in the Denver Coliseum where you’ll find singing, dancing, storytelling, food, art and much more. Incorporated as a nonprofit under the auspices of the Denver Indian Center over thirty-years ago, today, the powwow draws more than 1,600 dancers from close to 100 tribes from 38 states and Canada.



• **First Nations Development Institute** (FNDI) – Founded in 1980, FNDI began its national grantmaking program in 1993. Since then they have provided \$20.3 million in grants to 896 Native programs and projects in 38 states. Their mission is to strengthen American Indian economies to support healthy Native communities. FNDI believes that when armed with the appropriate resources, Native Peoples hold the capacity and ingenuity to ensure the sustainable, economic, spiritual and cultural well-being of their communities. In 2013, FNDI established their permanent home in Longmont, Colorado after they purchased their own office building.

• **Indian Voices Newsletter and Radio Show** – Since 1993, Theresa Halsey (Hunkpapa Lakota) has tirelessly volunteered her time as the Host and Producer of the award-winning, weekly Indian Voices Program featuring American Indian issues, news, interviews and music on KGNU Independent Community Radio broadcasting at 88.5 FM and 1390 AM in Denver/Boulder. Additionally, Theresa publishes an internet newsletter for the local Native American community.



• **International Institute for Indigenous Resource Management** (IIIRM) - Is a law and policy research institute, which was established in Denver, Colorado in 1997. This Institute's cadre of internationally-based legal scholars and researchers work on cutting-edge projects designed to empower native peoples by examining the role the law can play in establishing and enhancing indigenous peoples' control over and management of their lands and resources. Institute teams also study ways indigenous peoples can control the impacts of science and technology on their societies and help build and strengthen native legal, technical, management, and other systems and institutions.

• **National Native American AIDS Prevention Center** (NNAAPC) – Headquartered here in Denver, NNAAPC was founded in 1987 by American Indian and Alaska Native activists, social workers and public health professionals. NNAAPC is the national leader in addressing HIV/AIDS issues that impact Native communities by seeking to address these issues through its work in the areas of public health, community advocacy and mobilization, training and technical assistance, and communications/media. NNAAPC assist organizations that serve Native communities to plan; develop and manage HIV/AIDS prevention; intervention; and care/treatment programs.



• **Native American Bank, NA** (NAB) - In 2001, twenty Tribal Nations and Alaskan Native Corporations set out with a dream ?to create a national bank to serve Native people, communities, governments and enterprises across the country? and established the NAB. Their primary mission is to assist Native American and Alaskan Native individuals, enterprises and governments to reach their goals by providing affordable and flexible banking and financial services. NAB's administrative offices are located within the Plaza Tower of the Denver Place building in downtown Denver.



• **Native American Cancer Research Corporation** (NACR) – Based here in Denver is an American Indian operated community-based 501c3 nonprofit organization. Their mission is to reduce cancer incidence and increase survival among Native Americans. Their priority is to implement cancer research projects involving: prevention, health screening, education, training, control, treatment options, and support.

• **Native American Fish and Wildlife Society** (NAFWS) – Headquarter here in Denver, NAFWS is both a nonprofit and a national tribal organization established informally during the early 1980s. NAFWS was incorporated in 1983 to develop a national communications network for the exchange of information and management techniques related to self-determined tribal fish and wildlife management.

